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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CANBERRA 000262

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FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY NEGROPONTE FROM AMBASSADOR MCCALLUM  
STATE ALSO FOR SCA, EUR, INL AND EAP  
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SUBJECT: CORRECTED COPY - AUSTRALIAN POLICE AID TO  
AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ

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[1](#)B. CANBERRA 232  
[1](#)C. CANBERRA 230  
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Classified By: Ambassador Robert D. McCallum, Jr., for reasons 1.4 (b),  
(d).

#### SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C/NF) Ahead of the NATO Summit in Bucharest, Australia is considering deploying a small force of Australian Federal Police to southern Afghanistan to focus on counternarcotics. To assist Iraq enhance its policing capability, Australia is reviewing options for training outside Iraq, including in Kuwait and Australia. Options for police assistance to Afghanistan have not yet been approved by the Cabinet, however, according to the Australian Federal Police Commissioner. The Police Commissioner plans to travel to Kuwait and Afghanistan in April, and will visit the United States in June. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C/NF) In a March 18 meeting, Australian Federal Police (AFP) Commissioner Michael "Mick" Keelty updated me on GOA thinking about enhancing its police presence in Afghanistan and providing further police training for Iraq. He was joined by Mark Walters, National Manager for the AFP's International Deployment Group.

#### AFGHANISTAN: FOCUS ON COUNTER-NARCOTICS

[1](#)3. (C/NF) Keelty opened by noting that a planned March 17 meeting of the National Security Committee of Cabinet, which was to have reviewed a recommendation for an expanded AFP presence in Afghanistan, had been postponed, thus information he had hoped to give me on the AFP's role there was not yet available. He suggested, however, that an option under consideration was to increase the AFP presence from its current level of four officers -- two each in Kabul and

Jalalabad -- to about 16, including increasing the number in Kabul and establishing a new presence in Tarin Kowt, Oruzgan Province, and Kandahar City, Kandahar Province. While the AFP may engage in some capacity building in Afghanistan, the major focus would be on counter-narcotics, particularly tracking and interdicting the flow of heroin through Jalalabad to Pakistan for the international market. (Note: Local Australian media recently cited a confidential customs intelligence report and a recently-released International Narcotics Control Board report that police and security officials are bracing for a flood of "brown" Afghan heroin following a 34 percent increase in opium production in Afghanistan.) The AFP had sent two intelligence gathering teams to Afghanistan, including to Jalalabad, earlier in the year, he noted. There was no plan for the AFP to assume a counterterrorism role in Afghanistan, Keelty added, an area left completely to the Australian Defence Force.

#### INTEREST IN COORDINATING WITH DEA

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¶4. (C/NF) The Police Commissioner expressed interest in plans Q4. (C/NF) The Police Commissioner expressed interest in plans under consideration by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration to increase its presence in Afghanistan. Once the Australian Cabinet had approved the AFP's plan for an enhanced presence, Keelty said the AFP would contact DEA for preplanning prior to deployment. (Keelty did not specify the timing of the deployment.)

¶5. (C/NF) Keelty alluded to pressures on Prime Minister Rudd to provide inputs on Afghanistan. He was trying to "do the right thing" but other international partners needed to participate, too, he said. It was important to ensure that

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the AFP could play a role and could deliver value for the cost. One issue for the AFP presence was security: Australia relied on the UK private security company Armor to provide force protection for its AFP deployment. Keelty said some have argued that the high security cost did not justify the return of benefit.

#### IRAQ: POLICE TRAINING...BUT OUTSIDE IRAQ

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¶6. (C/NF) Keelty noted the AFP had provided police training for Iraqi police in Amman in the past. The GOA was currently reviewing other possible sites outside Iraq in which to continue police training. Possible venues were Kuwait, where Germany was currently conducting training, and Australia. A downside to the latter option was that some trainees may decide to stay in Australia, he added.

#### AFP COMMISSIONER'S TRAVEL PLANS TO AFGHANISTAN AND THE U.S.

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¶7. (C/NF) Keelty said he would not travel with Prime Minister Rudd to the United States at the end of March, but would join him on the London leg of his trip, and then break off to travel first to Kuwait and then to Afghanistan. The latter stop was not public and would be kept close hold. In late May, Keelty plans to accompany Home Affairs Minister Bob Debus to Canada and then to the United States, where a Five-Eyes meeting would take place on the west coast in early June.

MCCALLUM